

REHEARSAL SCRIPT

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SCENE 1. STAN'S HALLWAY. INT.
DAY.

LENA COMES OUT OF THE BEDROOM IN HER DRESSING-GOWN, YAWNING. SHE GOES TO THE FRONT DOOR AND PULLS ON THE PAPERS, SUN AND GUARDIAN, STUCK IN THE LETTER-BOX. THERE IS SOME RESISTANCE. SHE PULLS HARDER THEY COME FREE, RIPPING THE FRONT PAGE OF THE GUARDIAN. SHE GOES TO THE LOUNGE AND LOOKS IN.

SCENE 2: LOUNGE. INT. DAY.
LENA'S P.O.V.

THE LOUNGE IS THE USUAL MESS. LENA GIVES AN EXCLAMATION OF DISGUST. SHE GOES INTO THE:

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BLOOMERS NO.6
by
James Saunders

REHEARSALS: WEDNESDAY, 14th MARCH 1979
THURSDAY, 15th MARCH
FRIDAY, 16th MARCH
SATURDAY, 17th MARCH
SUNDAY, 18th MARCH
MONDAY, 19th MARCH

REHEARSAL ROOM: ST.JAMES' CHURCH HALL,
12 GLOUCESTER TERRACE, W.2.

TEL: 262.2054

RECORD: TUESDAY, 20th MARCH 20

Project No.: 1158/2456

SCENE 3: KITCHEN. INT. DAY.

THE KITCHEN IS THE USUAL MESS. LENA PUTS A KETTLE ON, THEN RUNS A GLASS OF WATER FROM THE TAP. SHE LOOKS AT IT FOR A MOMENT AS IF TO DRINK IT, THEN GOES INTO THE:

LENA GOES OUT.

STAN:
So much for my Saturday lie-
in. (GETS UP)

SCENE 4: BEDROOM. INT. DAY.

STAN IS ASLEEP WITH HIS MOUTH OPEN. LENA STANDS LOOKING AT HIM, THEN POURS THE WATER OVER HIS FACE. HE WAKES.

[STAN:
You poured a glass of water
over me.

LENA:
Yes.]

You did that STAN:
On purpose?

LENA:
Yes. I'm sorry.

SCENE 5: LOUNGE. INT. DAY.

STAN AND LENA ARE AT BREAKFAST. LENA IS READING HER 'GUARDIAN', STAN HIS 'SUN'. HE REACHES, WITHOUT LOOKING, FOR A PIECE OF TOAST, AND HITS THE BUTTER. HE TAKES A SLICE OF TOAST AND WIPES HIS HAND ON IT. HE LOOKS UP AND SEES LENA WATCHING HIM WITH DISTASTE. SHE WINCES AND GOES BACK TO THE WOMEN'S PAGE. STAN GOES TO SAY SOMETHING AND THINKS BETTER OF IT. HE TAKES SOME MARMALADE FROM THE POT ON TO HIS KNIFE, DROPS IT ON THE WAY BACK, COVERING THE NUDE. HE LICKS IT OFF. HE CATCHES LENA LOOKING AT HIM AGAIN. SHE GOES BACK TO HER PAPER.

STAN:
Why?

LENA:
What?

STAN:
The water.

LENA:
I felt like it.

STAN:
I see.

LENA:
~~Dr. Lamb thinks I hold myself back too much. He thinks I hold myself back too much.~~
He thinks I inhibit expressing my desires and dissatisfactions

[STAN:
~~She told you to pour water over me.~~]

[LENA:
~~He thinks~~] It's one reason I get my headaches.

[STAN:
~~You poured water over me as a headache cure?~~]

[LENA:
~~I said I was sorry.~~]

STAN:
Lena, about that stuff I brought in on my shoe last night ...

LENA:
It's nothing to do with that.

STAN:
I didn't know it was a letter
from your mother I wiped it off
with.

LENA READS

[Anyway, it's supposed to be
lucky. Maybe she'll make a
killing with those stocks and
shares she dabbles in.]

LENA READS

Wouldn't it be fairer if you
poured water over Dr. Lamb?
If ~~after~~ all it's his idea.

LENA:
(SPEAKS INTO THE PAPER AS
IF TO HERSELF) At least he
has style...

STAN:
What?

LENA:
Dr. Lamb. At least he has a
life-style. He lives with
grace.

STAN:
Who's she?

[LENA GIVES AN EXCLAMATION
AND RETURNS TO HER PAPER.]

[Lena, you're holding yourself
back again. Dr. Lamb
wouldn't like it.]

LENA:
[All right. You want to
know what's wrong?] Look
at this breakfast table.
Look at this room.

STAN LOOKS ROUND.

Do you know what that is on
the wall. Barbecue sauce.

STAN:
You threw it.

LENA:
look at the furniture. [I've
seen better at the end of a
jumble sale.] Not a thing of
any elegance, not a decent
ornament...

STAN:
You throw them, Lena.

LENA:
I wouldn't if they were
decent. We have no style,
Stanley, no elegance. [We're
primitive.] We might be cave
people. Well, at least the
cave people painted a few
bison on their walls, what
have we got, barbecue sauce?
[Can you imagine the House and
Gardens lot setting up their
tripod in here looking for
the best background to show
off our elegance, barbecue
sauce? We sit with the
milk bottle on the table
pouring marmalade over the
tabloid.]

STAN SITS LETTING IT WASH
OVER HIM LIKE THE WATERS
OF PENITENCE.

LENA:
I'm not blaming you, Stanley.

STAN:
Why not?

LENA:
Only don't criticize Dr.

Lamb. At least his life has
pattern, it has meaning. [As
lives amongst beautiful things,
he sets himself goals, he helps
people]...What are we doing with
our lives? [Stumbling back
and forth through the detritus.]
[scrabbling about to satisfy
our basic needs: the bed and
the trough.]

STAN:
This is not a bad little pad,
Lena.

LENA:
I don't want to live in a
pad, I'm not a rocket, I
want to live in a home. I
want Georgian windows and a
Sheraton dining-table and a
silver teapot and a patio from
which you can't see the dustbin
I want to be meaningful and
picturesque.

STAN:
You're picturesque.

LENA:
Don't be ridiculous.

STAN:
This is because your mother's
coming to tea, isn't it?

LENA NODS.

It'll soon be over. You
meeting her in town?

LENA:
Yes. The usual thing.
She'll drag me through
Harrods. We'll pop into
Fortnum's... You know I
don't like my mother any more
than you do, Stanley...

STAN:
Oh, I wouldn't say that...

LENA:
She's got no taste, I despise
her values, and yet I envy
her, I envy her - certituda.
And she'll come here and hold
her tea mug as if it's a dead
mouse and look down her nose
at the place. And you.

STAN:
I'll have a lick round while
you're in town, how about
that? Have a blitz, make the
flat look elegant.

LENA:
You're not a magician, Stanley

STAN:
It's all right here. It's
lived in, it's worn to the
shape of the wearer.

LENA:
Like an old boot.]

STAN:
Have another cup of tea. Milk
in last? (HE POURS HER TEA
FROM THE BROWN EARTHENWARE
TEAPOT. THE LID FALLS OFF
ON TO HER CUP)

SCENE 6. SALOON BAR. INT. DAY.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY IS SITTING
AT A TABLE WITH A YOUNG WOMAN.
NEXT TO THE TABLE ARE TWO
SUITCASES. THE WOMAN HAS BEEN
CRYING. THEY ARE NOT
TALKING. STAN ENTERS. HE
GOES TO THE BAR.

STAN:
Pint of best please.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY APPEARS
AT HIS ELBOW.

O'S:
Mr. Partridge.

STAN:
Mr. O'Shaughnessy. You're
looking very smart.

O'S:
I'll buy that.

STAN:
Very kind of you. Got a
wedding on, have you?

O'S:
I'm with my fiancée, you see.

[STAN:
OH? Where is she?

O'S:
Over there at the table. Don't
look, you'll embarrass her.

STAN:
I'll come and join you.

O'S:
No, oo. No offense, but
she's a wee bit upset.] Listen,
would you like something with it?

STAN:
Like what?

O'S:
Whiskey, you'll have a whiskey
with it.

STAN:
Why?

O'S:
(TO THE LANDLORD) And two
Irish whiskies. Make it large
ones.

STAN:
Is there something I can do
for you, Mr. O'Shaughnessy?

O'S:
Oh, it's a sad day today.

STAN:
Is it? Cheers.

O'S:
Good health.

STAN DRINKS

O'S:
Listen, I don't like to bent
about the bush.

STAN:
No, why should you?

O'S:
After all, you've only got
to say no.

STAN:
Yes.

O'S:
Yes, she has to go back to
Ireland for a month or two.
Family business, you know.

STAN:
Oh, that's a shame...

O'S:
That's what we're doing here,
you see, killing time till
the train. Really she
doesn't drink.

STAN:
Ah...

O'S:
Good health.

STAN:
Cheers.

O'S:
Wandering the streets,
sitting in cafes, that's what
we'll be doing till the train
goes. I've got a very funny
landlady, you know.

STAN:
Oh, what does she say?

O'S:
I mean she keeps a lookout,
keeps her door on the jar.

STAN:
What for?

O'S:
Hank-panky.

STAN:
Her dog?

O'S:
The opposite sex.

STAN:
From her?

O'S:
From me.

STAN:
Oh, I see...

O'S:
She won't let one in the
house. We're all single
men there, and her door open...

STAN:
She does all right then.

O'S:
I think you're misunderstanding
me, Mr. Partridge. She can't
abide that kind of thing.

STAN:
Hanky-panky?

O'S:
She has this theory God
invented sex on the Saturday,
and by the time he realised
what he'd done it was the
Sunday. It's like a
monastery, our house.

STAN:
Rough... [so you want me
to do something about your
landlady?

O'S:
Nothing to be done there,
Mr. Partridge. She's
incorrigable.

STAN:
Ah...]

O'S:
Yes, it's the last I'll
see of her for three or four
months.

STAN:
Your landlady?

O'S:
My fiancée.

STAN:
Ah. (HE TURNS TO LOOK AT
HER AGAIN)

O'S:
Don't let her catch you
looking.

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STAN:
She looks nice.

O'S:
Oh, she's nice, very nice.

STAN:
Well, I must go...

O'S:
You'll have another.

STAN:
Oh, I couldn't....

O'S:
You could. Another one in
here, please.

STAN:
Mr. O'Shaughnessy -

O'S:
Oh, yea, it's difficult.

STAN:
What is?

O'S:
Trying to lead a normal
life, you know what I mean?

STAN:
Yes, I suppose I do.]

O'S:
She's in the same boat,
you see: single girls only,
no men allowed.

STAN:
Landlord keeps his door
on the jar?

O'S:
Right.

STAN:
What I don't understand is, if
it's that difficult -

O'S:
Why don't we live together.

STAN:
Yes, why don't you?

O'S:
Well, we haven't been able
to get around to that yet;
we only met last Friday week,
you see.

STAN:
Your fiancée?

O'S:
It was love at first sight.

STAN:
Chere.

O'S:
Will you hang on!

STAN FREEZES, HIS WHISKEY
GLASS RAISED. O'S TAKES
IT FROM HIM.

He's only given you a single.
Put another one in there,
would you? And another pint
of this stuff.

STAN:
Mr. O'Shaughnessy -

O'S:
And they talk about the
permissive society.

STAN:
They do, don't they?

O'S:
I'd like to lay my hands on
some of that. How would you
fancy walking the streets of
London for five or six hours
[Mr. Partridge,] with two
suitcases?

STAN:
Oh, I wouldn't.

O'S:
And your fiancée going off
for the Lord knows how long.
How would you like that?

STAN:
I wouldn't, I wouldn't.

STAN'S DRINK ARRIVES.

O'S GIVES IT TO HIM.

O'S:
Good health.

STAN:
Cheers.

STAN DRINKS. O'S STARES
FIXEDLY AT HIM.

O'S:
So what do you say?

STAN:
What do I say?

O'S:
It'd only be for a couple
of hours. Just to get us
out of the cold, you know.

THE PENNY DROPS FOR STAN.

STAN:
Oh, I see! You mean you
want to erm... (TURNS TO
LOOK AT THE ~~WORD~~)

O'S:
Don't stare at her, you'll
make her embarrassed.

STAN:
I'd be glad to, Mr.
O'Shaughnessy. Only the
trouble is, you see, Lena's
bringing her mother back to
tea.

O'S:
To tea, is it? What time
would that be?

STAN:
Well, you know, tea time;
four or five.

O'S:
No problem, Mr. Partridge,
we'll be long gone by then.
The train's at four, we have
to get to the station.

STAN:
Lena's mother's a very
funny woman. She hates
hanky-panky, too. I'd like
to help you, Mr.
O'Shaughnessy, but I don't
think -

O'S:
Ah, she's crying again.

STAN:
Is she?

O'S:
Don't look, she's a shy girl.
I'd best get back over there.
Mr. Partridge, I don't want
you thinking I was after
putting you under any
obligation buying you them
drinks. You understand that.

STAN:
Oh, yes.

O'S:
It's your place, you've every
right to say so. Can I get
you another before I go?

STAN: No, no, thanks.

O'S:
Right.

PAUSE

Yes, I'll be off. We'll
maybe sit in the station
for four or five hours. We'll
muck in, don't worry, you're
not to feel badly about this.

PAUSE

Right, I'll be gone then.
(GOES TO LEAVE)

STAN:
Four o'clock, your train?

O'S:
That's right, it's around
then.

STAN:
So you'd have to leave by
three.

O'S:
Oh, definitely around three;
not much later than that.

STAN:
Well, in that case I think
it might be possible....

O'S:
You're a good fella, Mr.
Partridge. I won't forget
this. Oh, that's splendid.
If you could just let me
have the key then.

STAN:
Key?

O'S:
To get in.

STAN:
I'll come back with you.
O'S:
No, no, better not. She's
a very shy girl, Mr.
Partridge, she wouldn't want
anyone there when she...

STAN:
Yes, but you see I have to -

O'S:
If you could just give us
half an hour to acclimatise;
then she'll be all right. I'll
leave the key in the door,
how will that be?

STAN:
Yes, I suppose...

O'S:
You don't know how I
appreciate this.

STAN:
Oh I do.

O'S:
You'll have another drink?

SCENE 7: BLOOMERS. INT. DAY.

STAN:
I'll have another drink.

O'S:
Another large Irish here.
Well, here you get it and
we'll be off. Drink this
up, will you. (PUTS A NOTE
ON THE COUNTER)

STAN:
If you want to make a cup
of tea or anything -

O'S:
Don't you worry about us,
we'll muck in. And you
won't know we've been.
(PATS HIS BACK AND GOES OVER
TO HIS FIANCEE)

STAN WATCHES AS THEY PICK
UP THE SUITCASES AND GO.
TURNS TO THE LANDLORD.

STAN:
Line up what I can get
for this.

STAN COMES IN. HE'S HAD
A FEW, BUT IS NOT DRUNK, YET.
DINGLEY IS TALKING TO GEORGE.

DINGLEY:
It'll only take a few
minutes.

GEORGE:
Why should I do it? I don't
like cats.

DING:
I'm not asking you to like
it, just to bury it, George.

GEORGE:
No.

DING:
Poor old lady, it's not much
to ask.

GEORGE:
She's no older than I am.
She shouldn't have a cat
if she can't get rid of it.

DING:
Well I think you're a
miserable old devil.

GEORGE:
I don't like cats. They
scratch the seedlings up,
squirt their stuff over things.
I'd kill 'em all.

DING:
So you won't do it?

GEORGE:
Throw it in the dustbin.

DING:
One of these days, George,
someone's going to be in a
position to say that about
you.

GEORGE:
I don't want to argue in
front of the plants. It
upsets them.

GEORGE TURNS AWAY TO HIS
PLANTS. STAN IS GATHERING
A BUNCH OF MIXED FLOWERS.

DING:
Stan, what are you doing
up? I thought you stayed
in bed Saturday mornings.

STAN:
Lena's mother's coming to
tea. I've got to make the
place look nice. Put these
on the book, will you?

DING:
Don't worry about that. Take
a few more, make a nice
bunch. These are nice,
take half a dozen. Stan,
have you got ten minutes to
spare?

STAN:
I've got a quarter of an hour.
I'm not allowed home yet.

DING:
It's old Mrs. Fox. You know,
the one who used to come in
with the cat on the lead?
She's just been in. She found
it dead this morning.

STAN:
Oh dear.

DING:
She's very upset. She was
attached to that cat.

STAN:
By the lead.

DING:
Don't muck about, Stan. She
wants to bury it somewhere
nice. She hasn't got a garden
you see, just a window-box.

STAN:
Won't that take it?

DING:
It's not funny, Stan. She's
got a spot in mind.

STAN:
Oh yes?

DING:
In the park.

STAN:
In the park?

DING:
Where it used to do its
jobs.

STAN:
I see.

DING:
She can't do it on her own,
of course.

STAN:
You mean you want me to inter
this feline.

DINGLEY.
It's just that I've got a job
on, I'm late already.
And George won't.

STAN.
There are people you can rely
on and people you can't, you
ought to know that.

DINGLEY.
You mean you'll do it?

STAN.
This is my good deed day.
I'm not an unfeeling old devil.
If I can't be elegant at least
I can be useful. Where is it?

DINGLEY.
Here.

(DINGLEY HANDS HIM A CARRIER
BAG. STAN LOCKS IN)

STAN.
It's dead right enough. Right
then.

(SEAN PUTS HIS FLOWERS IN
THE BAG AND STARTS TO GO)

DINGLEY.
You'll need a spade.

STAN.
I'll need a spade.

(HE TAKES ONE)

DINGLEY.
You're going to put it in the
dustbin, aren't you?

STAN.
How did you know?

DINGLEY.
Well you can't. She wants to
come with you.

STAN.
Doesn't she trust us?

DINGLEY.
She wants to see it in. She's
doing a bit of shopping, she'll
be back in a minute.

STAN.
Oh....

DINGLEY.
You said you'd do it.

STAN.
All right, I'll do it.

DINGLEY.
It's oot much to do for an
old lady.

STAN.
Don't keep on about it,
I'll do it.

DINGLEY.
I'll be off then.

(HE GIVES STAN A POUND)

DINGLEY.
Take her over the road and
buy her a drink first. She
doesn't get much.

STAN.
And ooo for me.

DINGLEY.
And ooo for you. Look after
the shop, George.

(DINGLEY GOES OUT)

STAN.
Two thousand years of
Christiaicity and you woo't
bury an old lady's cat. I
reckon you've just chalked
up another six months in
purgatory. And don't expect
a good word from me, I'll be
up there laughing.

GEORGE.
I doo't like cats.

STAN.
It ought to give you a kick
to bury one theo.

(MRS. FOX COMES IN)

STAN.
Mrs. Fox? Staoley Partridge.
I heard about your loss, I'm
so sorry. I'm, erm, doing the
honours with the erm....I
thought you might like a couple
of drinks first, on me of
course. Let me take your
shopping. (HE TAKES HER BAG AS
THEY GO OUT)

SCENE 8. SALOON BAR. INT. DAY.

(STAN AND MRS. FOX ARE AT A
TABLE WITH DRINKS. MRS. FOX DABS
HER EYES)

MRS. FOX.

I'm so sorry, it must be the drink.

I'm not used to it.

STAN.

Now don't apologise, Mrs. Fox,
there's nothing wrong with a bit
of honest emetico. There's not
enough of it about.

MRS. FOX.

I know she was only a cat...

STAN.

If you can love cats you can love
people that's what I think.
Probably my trouble, I hate the
creatures...No, I'm joking.

MRS. FOX.

Have you got a cat, Mr....

STAN.

Got one, I played one once.

In pantomime. Stanley Fartridge,
the actor, you'd have seen me on
the box.

(HE GIVES HER A TELEVISUAL SMILE.
SHE LOOKS BLANK)

STAN.

Well, your memory goes as you get
elder, doesn't it? [I haven't
done much lately, felt the need
for a sabbatical, it's a debased
medium, don't you think so?

MRS. FOX.

I like televisioo.

STAN.

Oh, it's very nice...watch Z-Cara,
did you?

MRS. FOX.

Oh yes.

STAN.

I played a villain.

(HE PUTS ON HIS VILLAIN'S FACE.
SHE SHAKES HER HEAD)

STAN.
TIVV? Crumby Bitelets? I was the
biscuit eater.

(HE SHOWS HER HIS TEETH. SHE
SHAKES HER HEAD)

STAN.
No, well, I'm more a stage actor
really. How about another drink
before we go?

SCENE 9. PARK. EXT. DAY.

(MRS. FOX AND STAN ARE WALKING,
STAN WITH THE TWO CARRIER BAGS)

STAN.
...and the backbiting in the
profession, you wouldn't believe,
cat-fleas aren't in it. I was
talking to Peter the other day,
that's Peter Hall at the National,
I said, look, Peter....

MRS. FOX.
I thought just here.

STAN.
Here?

MRS. FOX.
Under the rhododendrons.

STAN.
Right. You wait there, it won't
take a minute.

(STAN TAKES ONE OF THE BAGS AND
STARTS DIGGING BETWEEN THE
RHODODENDRONS. MRS. FOX HICCUPS.
A PARK ATTENDANT APPEARS)

PA.
Might I ask what you're doing?

STAN.
It's all right. Not to worry. I
shant disturb the plants. I'm a
horticulturist.

PA.
What are you removing?

STAN.
I'm not removing anything, I'm
putting something in.

PA.
What?

STAN.
(CONFIDENTIALLY) I'm burying the
lady's cat. She wanted it buried
here.

PA.
Why?

STAN.
(CONFIDENTIALLY) It used to do it's
business here.

PA.
That's no reason to bury it here.

STAN.
It's dead.

PA.
I'm sorry, you can't bury cats on
municipal property, alive or dead.

STAN.
Only one cat.

PA.
I don't care how many. It's not
allowed.

STAN.
I've never heard that.

PA.
Well I'm telling you.

STAN.
Can you quote me the byelaw?

PA.
No, I can't.

STAN.
Because there isn't one, is there?
There's nothing up on park
regulations. It's not a ballgame,
you know, it's not a musical
instrument it's a cat. One dead
cat. In a carrier bag. All
right?

(THE PA SHAKES HIS HEAD)

STAN.
I'll stamp it down flat, I can't
leave a mound, you won't know it's
there....I'm not putting a monument
up to it, I mean I don't have in
mind a Gothic memorial.....Look, be
reasonable, there might be any
number of dead cats down there,
you wouldn't know, would you?
I could have done it by now if
you hadn't come along, and you'd
be none the wiser.

PA.
But I did come along.

MRS. FOX.
Is something wrong?

STAN.
It's all right, Mrs. Fox, don't
you worry about a thing. (TO PA)
You'll be old some day.

PA.
What's that got to do with it?

STAN.
She's a pensioner. Look at her.

(MRS. FOX HICCUPS)

STAN.
She doesn't ask much of life.
Just to be left in peace to bury
her cat.

PA.
Not here.

STAN.
Mindless bureaucracy. Don't you
find it....?

PA.
What's in that other bag?

STAN.
Mind your own business. A
peosioner's shopping, do you mind?

(THE PA GOES OVER AND LOOKS DOWN
INTO THE BAG. HE COMES BACK)

PA.
There's a dead cat io that bag.

STAN.
(IRRITATED) All right, so this
is the shopping.

PA.
You're burying the shopping?

STAN.
You wouldn't let me, would you?
I suppose there's a byelaw
against burying shopping. Oh, now,
look, she hasn't got anywhere else,
you see, she's only got a window
box...

PA.
Won't that take it?

STAN.
I don't think that's very funny.

(STAN PUTS HIS HAND IN HIS
POCKET)

STAN.
Well, let's be fair about this.
I realise I've taken up your
valuable time, so...

(HE FEELS IN HIS OTHER POCKETS,
WITH NO RESULT)

STAN.
Oh.....So you're not going to
let me bury an old lady's cat.

(PA SHAKES HIS HEAD)

STAN.
We owe this park, you know, we,
the public. We pay your wages.

PA.
You might put them up theo,
they're a disgrace.

STAN.
There's no arguing with the
gauleiter mentality. Come on,
Mrs. Fox.

(HE PICKS UP HIS BAG AND
SPADE, CROSSES TO MRS. FOX
AND PICKS UP THE OTHER BAG)

MRS. FOX.
Won't he let us do it?

(STAN MAKES ELABORATE
GESTURES AND GRIMACES OF
PACIFICATION AND SECRECY,
AND STEERS MRS. FOX AWAY,
STOPPING ONLY TO HISS OVER
HIS SHOULDER.)

STAN.
Fascist...

SCENE 10. STAN'S FRONT DOOR. EXT.
DAY.

(THE KEY IS IN THE LOCK.
STAN OPENS THE DOOR AND LETS
MRS. FOX IN)

SCENE 11. HALLWAY. INT. DAY.

(STAN SHUTS THE DOOR,
COUGHING LOUDLY. HE TAKES A
GLANCE TOWARDS THE BEDROOM
DOOR AND USHERS MRS. FOX
INTO THE LOUNGE)

SCENE 12. LOUNGE. INT. DAY.

(STAN PUTS THE CARRIER BAGS ON ONE OF THE EASY CHAIRS AND HIS SPADE AGAINST THE SIDEBBOARD, AND SITS MRS. FOX IN THE OTHER EASY CHAIR. THE TWO SUITCASES ARE IN EVIDENCE)

STAN.
You rest your legs a minute, Mrs. Fox, then I'll see you home. I'm sorry about this.

MRS. FOX.
What am I going to do about Tibbles?

STAN.
I've told you, you're not to worry. Leave Tibbles with me and I'll get her in there this evening.

MRS. FOX.
But you said the man wouldn't let you.

STAN.
The man won't be there, will he? Not when I hop over the railings.

MRS. FOX.
I didn't want to cause any trouble. I've always been independent.

(SHE BRINGS OUT HER HANDKERCHIEF)

STAN.
It's no trouble. I know what you need.

(HE BRINGS OUT A BOTTLE OF SCOTCH AND TWO GLASSES, BREAKS THE SEAL AND POURS)

STAN.
For special guests, this is.

(HE OLIVES A GLASS TO MRS. FOX)

MRS. FOX.
Oh, I don't know whether I ought.

STAN.
Get it down you, Mrs. Fox, that's an order. Anyone who's lived as long as you have in this world deserves all she can get. [Drink it up, it'll do you the world of good.]
Excuse me one moment.

(HE DOWNS HIS WHISKEY AND GOES INTO THE HALLWAY)

SCENE 13. HALLWAY. INT. DAY.

(HE CREEPS TO THE BEDROOM DOOR AND LISTENS, BUT CAN HEAR NOTHING. HE RETURNS TO THE LOUNGE)

SCENE 14. LOUNGE. INT. DAY.

(MRS. FOX'S GLASS IS EMPTY. SHE IS ASLEEP)

STAN.
Mrs. Fox?

(SHE DOESN'T STIR)

[STAN.
Poor old soul....I'll give her ten minutes.

(HE LOOKS AT HIS WATCH, THEN LOOKS ROUND THE ROOM AT THE SHAMBLES. HE POURS HIMSELF ANOTHER DRINK AND DOWNS IT)

STAN.
So much for good works.
Now for the elegance.

(HE STARTS TO TIDY THE ROOM UP. THERE IS THE SOUND OF A TAXI STOPPING OUTSIDE. HE LISTENS, GOES TO THE WINDOW AND LOOKS OUT)

STAN.
Ah....

(HE CONSIDERS FOR A MOMENT, THEN DASHES TO THE HALLWAY)

SCENE 15. HALLWAY. INT.DAY.

(HE GOES TO THE BEDROOM DOOR, PONDERING FOR A MOMENT, THEN TURNS THE KEY IN THE LOCK AND POCKETS IT. HE GOES BACK INTO THE LOUNGE)

SCENE 16. LOUNGE. INT.DAY.

STAN.
Mrs. Fox...?

(SHE DOESN'T STIR. HE LOOKS ROUND AT THE SHAMBLES, PICKS UP THE TWO SUITCASES AND IS CARRYING THEM TO THE DOOR WHEN LENA COMES IN WITH HER MOTHER, WHO IS LADEN WITH SHOPPING BAGS.)

STAN.
Well, hello, here's a surprise, I didn't expect you so soon.

LENA.
(SV) Oh my God...

MOTHER.
(IN BETWEEN LOOKING AT THE PLAT) Hallo, Stanley, how are you?

STAN.
Oh, I'm splendid, you're looking bigger better, did you have a good trip up from Ireland, I mean, or... Epsom, Epsom! Come in, sit down, let me take your loot, wait!

(HE HAD SEEN THE CARRIER BAGS ON THE CHAIR. HE REMOVES THEM, AND PUTS THE BAGS DOWN ELSEWHERE, KEEPING TWO OF THEM SEPARATE)

STAN.
I was just doing a bit of tidying up. Sit down for God's sake, I mean do.

(THE MOTHER SITS DOWN.
LENA IS LOOKING AT MRS.FOX)

STAN.
Hallo, Lena, have a good
shop did you? How's the
old Burlingtoo Arcade these
days?

LENA.
Mother didn't tell me, she
has to get back early, that's
why we're....back early.

STAN.
Well that's good.

MOTHER.
I have to collect my cat
from the vet.

STAN.
Is it dead? No, it wouldn't
be. [What a pity. I mean that
it's ill. Oops.]

(HE NEARLY KNOCKS THE WHISKY
BOTTLE OFF THE TABLE, CATCHES
IT)

STAN.
Would you like a drink?

I'll pour you one.

(HE POURS A GLASS OF SCOTCH
INTO HIS GLASS)

LENA.
Mother doesn't drink.

STAN.
You don't drink, course you
don't.

(HE DRINKS IT HIMSELF. IT
GOES DOWN THE WRONG WAY. MRS.FOX
HICCUPS IN HER SLEEP)

LENA.
Would you like a cup of tea,
mother.

(THE MOTHER NODS)

LENA.
I'll go and make one.]

(SHE STOPS AT STAN)

LENA.
Stanley, what are those
suitcases?

STAN.
Um, that's a....long story.
Very boring. I'll tell you
later.

LENA.
And who's that, or is that a
long story?

STAN.
No, no, that's Mrs. Fox,
very short.

(HE SMILES INGRATIATINGLY)

LENA.
I see.

(LENA GOES OUT)

STAN.
Yes, poor old soul, she lost
her cat. I mean it died,
she hasn't lost it, she knows
where it is. Where is it....

(HE LOOKS ROUND)

STAN.
I apologise for the mess.
And the spade. You've never
seen a spade before, I expect.
[That's a joke.

(HE LAUGHS, STOPS)]

STAN.
No, I've been looking after
her, you have to humour
people with pets, don't you,
no I don't mean that, what
did your cat die of, no,
I mean, what do I mean...?

LENA.
(FROM OUTSIDE) Stanley!

STAN.
Excuse me. Help yourself
to, no, you don't.

(HE GOES OUT)

SCENE 17. HALLWAY. INT. DAY.

(THE DIALOGUE IS CONDUCTED
ALMOST IN A WHISPER, LENA
BECAUSE OF HER MOTHER, STAN
BECAUSE OF THE OCCUPANT OF
THE BEDROOM)

LENA.
The bedroom door's locked.

STAN.
Is it?

LENA.
You must have locked it.

STAN.
No.

LENA.
Then who did?

STAN.
Erm...

LENA.
There's only us two.

STAN.
No.

LENA.
Who then?

STAN.
Mr. O'Shaughnessy.

LENA.
Mr. O'Shaughnessy locked our
bedroom door?

STAN.
Ha needed a rest, you see.

LENA.
In our bedroom?

STAN.
Could I tell you about this
later?

LENA.
But I want to get in there.

STAN.
You can't, can you?
Mr. O'Shaughnessy is in
there.

LENA.
Are they his suitcases?
Or do they belong to that
woman?

SCENE 18. LOUNGE. INT. DAY.

STAN.
Wait a minute. They're hers
No, they're his.

LENA.
Is he going somewhere?

STAN.
No.

LENA.
And who is that woman?

STAN.
~~That~~ woman? That's Mrs. Fox.

LENA.
I know it's Mrs. Fox.

STAN.
Her cat died.

LENA.
Stanley, you're drunk.

STAN.
That's right.

(LENA STARES AT HIM FOR A
MOMENT, THEN GOES INTO THE
KITCHEN. SEAN LISTENS AT THE
BEDROOM DOOR, THEN SIGHS AND
GOES BACK INTO THE LOUNGE)

(LENA, THE MOTHER, MRS. FOX
AND SEAN SIT. LENA AND HER
MOTHER DRINK TEA, MRS. FOX
IS ASLEEP. THERE IS A TIGHT
SILENCE. STAN LEANS OVER
MRS. FOX.)

[STAN.
Mrs. Fox...?]

(SHE DOESN'T RESPOND.
LENA TURNS TO THE DOOR)

LENA.
What's that?

STAN.
What?

LENA.
That scrabbling noise.

(SEAN LISTENS)

STAN.
That'll be the door rattling.

LENA.
Why?

STAN.
It'll be Mr. O'Shaughnessy.
He'll be wanting to get out.
To catch the train.

LENA.
You said he wasn't going
anywhere.

STAN.
Well, no.

LENA.
Why doesn't he get out if he
wants to get out?

STAN.
He's locked in, isn't he?

LENA.
But he locked himself in.

STAN.
I'll go and see what the
trouble is, shall I? Not to
worry, not to worry.

(HE GETS UP UNSTEADILY AND
GOES INTO THE HALLWAY)

SCENE 19. HALLWAY. INT. DAY.

(STAN GOES TO THE BEDROOM
DOOR AND UNLOCKS IT. HE KNOCKS,
OPENS IT IMMEDIATELY AND LOOKS
IN)

STAN.
Oh, sorry....

(HE CLOSES IT AGAIN. HE GIVES
A LITTLE CRY OF DESPAIR AND
BITES HIS NAIL. THEN HE GOES
BACK INTO THE LOUNGE)

SCENE 20. LOUNGE. INT. DAY.

STAN.
Lena....I think perhaps I'd
better have a word with you...

(THERE IS A NOISE FROM THE
WINDOW. IT BEGINS TO SLIDE UP.
STAN GOES TO THE WINDOW.
MR. O'S CLIMBS IN, IN SHIRT,
AND TROUSERS.)

O'S.

Ah, Mr. Patridge, you're
back. The door jammed, I
had to get out through the
window.

STAN.

You're getting in through
the window.

(O'S SEES THE OTHERS)

O'S.

Oh, I'm sorry, is it a party?

(TO LENA) Hello there,
Miss Lena.

(STAN, PAST TRYING TO TAKE
CONTROL, STANDS WAITING FOR
IT ALL TO GO AWAY. O'S
REGISTERS THE SILENCE.)

O'S.

Don't mind me. It's my fiancée,
you see, she has to go to tho..

(O'S GOES TO THE DOOR AND OUT,
BACK SHIRT-TAIL FLAPPING.
LENA LOOKS AT STAN)

STAN.

Erm....

(MRS. FOX HICCUPS)

SCENE 21. THE SAME.

(LENA SITS WITH A GLASS OF
WHISKY. SHE DRAINS IT,
POURS ANOTHER. THE FRONT
DOOR SLAMS. SHE WAITS. STAN
COMES IN)

STAN.

Ah, your mother's gone,
has she?

LENA.

She decided not to wait to
say goodbye.

STAN.

Right.....I saw Mrs. Fox
home...poor old soul.

She appreciated the nap,
she'd been suffering from
insomnia.....I forgot her
shopping, I'll take it round
now.

(HE LOOKS FOR HER CARRIER BAG,
FINDS ONE, LOOKS INSIDE)

STAN.

What's this?

(HE TAKES OUT A BIRD)

STAN.
Pigeons? She wouldn't
buy pigeons.

LENA.
Grouse. A brace of grouse
from Fortnum's.

STAN.
That'll be nice.

LENA.
They're my mother's. I don't
know how it happened, she
always counts her parcels.

(STAN REGISTERS THE
IMPLICATIONS OF THIS, THEN
SEARCHES FOR ANOTHER BAG.
HE FINDS IT)

LENA.
What's in there?

STAN.
Mrs. Fox's shopping. I'll take
it round.

(HE STARTS TO GO)

LENA.
Stanley...

(HE WAITS)

LENA.
I'm not angry. I'm not
going to scream and I'm
not going to throw anything.
[I'm strangely calm.] Sit
down.

(STAN SITS)

LENA.
Now, would you like to tell
me all about it?

(STAN NODS)

LENA.
Just a moment.

(LENA DOWNS HER SCOTCH)

LENA.
(GENTLY) Right.

STAN.
Well, you see, old Mrs. Fox
had this cat, Tibbles...

(HE CLEARS HIS THROAT)

SCENE 21. SALOON BAR. INT. DAY.

(STAN IS AT THE BAR WITH
DINGLEY)

STAN.
...and that's it. It's been
a funny old day. Cheers.

DINGLEY.
Cheers.

(THEY DRINK)

DINGLEY.
You've surpassed yourself,
haven't you.

STAN.
Lena said that. [She was very
reasonable. I think I may
have gone up in her
estimation. She called me a
perverse genius. Mind you,
she'd had a few by then.]
Well, must get back, I've
got some grouse in the oven.
Oh, Dingley, Mrs. Fox is on
your way, drop this in as
you pass, would you? (THE
SHOPPING) I couldn't get any
answer, she must be asleep,
poor old soul. Oh, by the way;
I was thinking, apropos the
grouse, it's a pity to spoil
the ship for a haporth of
tar...

DINGLEY.
You want to buy a bottle of
wines to go with it.

STAN.
You must be psychic. Put it
on the book.

(DINGLEY GIVES HIM A COUPLE OF
QUID)

STAN.
Yes, I'm cooking tonight.
Lena's had a hard day, you
know what mothers are. Roast
grouse, game chips, a nice
bottle of burgundy...

DINGLEY.
What about the cat?

STAN.
I don't know, it's up to the
mother. I should think a white
wine.

DINGLEY.
I mean what about Mrs. Fox.

STAN.
Oh, yes, I'd forgotten. Tell
her when you see her that
I'll call round tomorrow
morning to take her up there.

DINGLEY.
Up where?

STAN.
The park. To show her the
exact spot.

DINGLEY.
But that's downright dishonest.

STAN.
I know. Honesty would mean
telling her that her Tibbles
is in an Epsom dustbin. I
don't really value my virtue
that highly. Do you?

DINGLEY.
Cheers.

STAN.
Cheers.

TYPED BY
ED/MF.
30.10.78.